

Remarks

Claim 8 is amended. Claims 51-69 are newly added. The amendments and new claims are supported in the application as filed. For example, a monolithic tabletop is discussed in paragraphs [0026], [0027], and [0029] (of the published application). No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-7 and 9-50 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant expressly reserves the right to prosecute these claims in the future.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 8-15 and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of Sines et al. (2003/0027632) (hereinafter “Sines”) and Silva et al. (U.S. Patent 7,294,059) (hereinafter “Silva”). Claims 16, 17, 21, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of Sines, Silva, and Minami (WO 02/099479) (hereinafter “Minami”).

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are not obvious for at least the following reasons. By way of example, claim 8 is directed to a gaming machine table. Claim 8 has been amended to recite:

a table chassis;
one or more display screens mounted in the table chassis
and facing generally upward for viewing by one or more players
seated proximate the table chassis;
a monolithic tabletop disposed over the table chassis;
and
a contactless input interface operable to receive player
selections associated with the game play, the input interface
disposed within the table chassis adjacent to a portion of the
monolithic tabletop, the input interface including an active region
having a first EM field associated therewith, the input interface
being configured or designed such that the first EM field is
interrupted by proximity with the surface of the portion of the
monolithic tabletop, **the monolithic tabletop covering all
peripheral devices coupled with the table chassis, including the
one or more display screens and the contactless input interface.**

(Emphasis added).

Various embodiments of a gaming machine having a monolithic tabletop are discussed in the application as filed. For example, the application states:

[0029] In the present embodiment, tabletop 122 is a monolithic surface that can be transparent or semi transparent. This tabletop 122 protects the components of the gaming machine cocktail table

from environmental contamination, such as spilled food or beverages, as well as dust and dirt. In some embodiments, the monolithic tabletop 122 is a glass sheet, having a thickness of at least about one-half inch. However, other materials having various thicknesses can be used, such as acrylic or plexiglass. In some embodiments, the monolithic tabletop can be a surface composed of multiple pieces, such as panels of glass or other materials, depending on the application. Furthermore, tabletop 122 can be formed in various shapes, depending on the application. Tabletop 122 can include ornamentation that is applied directly on its surface or near its top or bottom surface. For instance, ornamentation can be included on tabletop 122 by a process such as silkscreening, etching, frosting, painting, dying, or the like, and can include graphics, logos, patterns, a solid border, or the like. **All or substantially all of a player's interaction with the gaming machine is through tabletop 122**, as described in more detail below.

(Emphasis added).

The Office Action cites Sines as disclosing or suggesting a monolithic tabletop. (Page 2, line 26). However, the gaming machine top described in Sines does not cover the simulated dealing shoe 80, as is shown in Fig. 1. The dealing shoe 80 includes various displays and controls relating to the game of chance, such as controls for dealing cards to players. (¶ [0107]-[0114]). The dealing shoe 80 is a peripheral device coupled with the gaming machine and connected with the game processor or processors by one or more cables. (¶ [0088]-[0091]). Since the tabletop described in Sines does not cover the simulated dealing shoe, Sines fails to disclose or suggest a monolithic tabletop “covering all peripheral devices coupled with the table chassis,” as recited in claim 8.

Furthermore, the Office Action acknowledges that Sines does not disclose a contactless input interface. (Page 3, lines 3-10). Since Sines fails to disclose or suggest a contactless input interface, Sines necessarily fails to disclose or suggest a monolithic tabletop that covers a contactless input interface, as recited in claim 8 as amended.

Silva and Minami are not cited in the Office Action as disclosing or suggesting a monolithic tabletop. Therefore, Silva and Minami do not remedy the deficiencies of Sines in this regard.

Thus, claim 8 as amended recites features that are not disclosed or suggested in Sines, considered alone or in combination with Silva and Minami. Therefore, claim 8 is not obvious in view of Sines, Silva, and Minami.

Independent claim 65 recites features similar to claim 8 and thus is not obvious for at least the same reasons as set forth with respect to claim 8.

The remaining claims are dependent claims which include, by virtue of their dependency, the features of the independent claims on which they are based. Therefore, the dependent claims are not obvious for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections to the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, including any extension fees, which may be required or credit any overpayment directly to the account of the undersigned, No. 50-4480 (Order No. IGT1P089).

Respectfully submitted,
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